

Testimony for Public Hearing
before the CT Joint Environmental Committee
March 17, 2014

Corinne Caron Collins
210 Crow Hill Rd
Stafford Springs, CT 06076

S.B. 445, the "puppy mill bill"

Good afternoon Joint Environmental Committee members. My name is Corinne Caron Collins and I am an advocate for animals. I am writing today to respectfully ask you to approve S.B. 445 with the following additional language:

- (1) prohibit the sale of commercially-bred dogs in new pet shops (This was recommended by the bipartisan CT Task Force Concerning the Sale of Cats and Dogs at CT Pet Shops from Inhumane Origins); and
- (2) phase out the sale of commercially-bred dogs in the 16 Connecticut pet shops that still sell them.

I strongly believe that Connecticut is a diverse state of forward thinkers. We have stood up for humane rights for people. I implore you to stand up for humane rights for dogs and cats. If Connecticut supports S.B. 445 it will speak volumes to other states.

I want to thank the legislature for passing a law in 2009 that requires pet shops to provide breeder information to the Department of Agriculture. In my work as an animal advocate, I discovered to my extreme dismay however, that Connecticut does very little to deter the abuse of millions of animals. By allowing the sale of puppy mill animals, we are supporting extremely inhumane treatment. I hope you agree that Connecticut can and should do more.

Unfortunately, there are 16 pet stores in Connecticut that currently supply puppies from puppy mills. As you may be aware, puppy mills are

large-scale commercial breeding operations where profits are given a much higher priority over the well-being of animals. As you may know, when profits are put before the welfare of "someone," the "someone" invariably loses. In this case, it is millions of dogs. Puppy mills typically breed dogs at every opportunity with little or no recovery time between litters and often discard the breeding animals once they can no longer produce for them. Millions of puppies that are bred from these mills often have health and behavior problems that cannot be detected at the time of purchase. Millions of unaware people fall for the cuteness of these puppies only to find out later that their best friends are ill and have a much shorter life span than they ever thought. They are totally unaware of the ugly reality of where their dog came from.

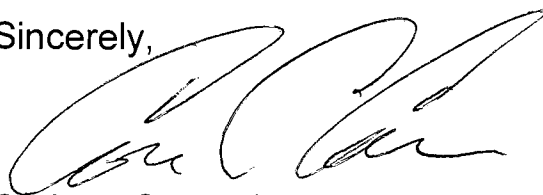
There is only one sure way to combat the tragedy of mass breeding operations – do not support them.

There are other options for pet shops. There are many pet shops that build successful businesses based on the ethical principles of adoption and rescue. This model speaks volumes to the public and many people flock to these pet shops because of their humane practices. There are many purebred puppies available through rescue organizations that would gladly fill the vacant spaces that a ban of puppy mill dogs would leave.

Once again, let me state that I strongly believe that Connecticut should stand up for the humane treatment of dogs and cats. If Connecticut supports S.B. 445 it will speak volumes to other states. I therefore, respectfully request that the Joint Environmental Committee members approve S.B. 445 with aforementioned language additions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Corinne Caron Collins', written in a cursive style.

Corinne Caron Collins